

As darkness falls

By Diane Syer, Barbara Fitchette and Kim DeLeary

Alberta's Native population are suffering great hardships in many areas of the social spectrum. The following is a report that was done a number of years ago in Ontario, but is just as relevant today in Alberta as it was then. Unless the Provincial Government recognizes the value in research and special programs for the Native population, we will continue to be in a crisis situation as far as Native suicides are concerned.

Nearly five per cent of the Canadian population is made up of aboriginal or native peoples. There are three major groups of native people:

Status Indians

These are registered Indians who hold membership in a band and have certain rights guaranteed by the Indian Act or by individual treaties. There are over 600 bands in Canada who occupy, or have access to, 2,274 reserves of varying sizes across the nation. Approximately seventy per cent of status Indians live on reserves or on Crown land. A Medical Services Branch Annual Report of the Department of Health and Welfare lists 305,422 registered status Indians at mid-year, 1979.

Inuit

The Inuit are popularly referred to as Eskimos by the white population. They are concentrated in remote areas of the Province of Quebec and in the Northwest Territories. The Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development lists 20,273 of these people in 1979.

Metis and Non-Status Indians

The Metis are people of mixed Indian and white blood who identify strongly with their Indian ancestry.

Non-status Indians are full bloods who have waived or lost their status rights in order either to become franchised (prior to 1960) or to own property and/or businesses off the reserve. Some have also lost their status simply because their parents failed to register them at, or shortly after birth.

It is estimated that there are between 700,000 and 750,000 Metis and non-status Indians in Canada.

Violent Death, Including Suicide
Deaths from accidents, poison-

ings and violence account for thirty-five per cent of all deaths in the Indian population. The rate of violent death is more than three times higher than that for the general Canadian population (69/100,000 population). Deaths from suicide accounted for fourteen per cent of all accidental and violent deaths and the rate was nearly four times that for Canada. Of those who died from suicide, 24.18% were in the 15 to 19 years age group and 27.47% were 20 to 24 years of age. Males outnumbered females by a ratio of 3.7 to 1. Sixty-one per cent of suicides in males were by firearms and 68% of suicides in females were by overdose.

Frequently Indian suicides occur in a cluster, or epidemic pattern. For example, in 1976 on the Manitoulin Island Reserve, in one small community of 200 people, 8 young native people committed suicide within a twelve month period. What are the factors or variables which contribute to these high rates of violent death and suicide? Studies of Canadian native people suggest that there are a number of contributing factors, such as the loss of the native person's traditional culture and values, the loss of the native religion and the devaluation of the spiritual leaders and other role models. The white educational system which has been imposed on the native people has been a dismal failure. Native children drop out of school at the rate of more than sixty per cent by grade eight, with fewer than ten per cent making it to grade twelve. Economically, native people are the most disadvantaged in the country. Ninety per cent live on incomes below the poverty level. Over 70% are unemployed. At least 40% are on welfare.

Very few reserves have any viable economic base, with the result that native people who remain on the reserves are almost forced to go on welfare, with the sometimes exception of such seasonal work as hunting guide or ranch-hand. Many attempt to find work in large urban areas, but because of their poor education and the fact that non-traditional skills are not taught in the school system, the young native person is not equipped to compete with the white man in the latter's market place.

These circumstances combine



Native People

Their historical impact in Alberta

October 23, 1984 to
December 11, 1984
8 Tuesday Sessions

Course Description

This course offers a practical understanding of the historical impact the Native people have had in Alberta's development. This course is not offered through the regular history department. Our instructor, along with our staff, have designed this course utilizing experience learned from past courses dealing with similar subject matter. This course is recommended to anyone working with native people. Through the eight sessions, participants will be introduced to the fascinating history of Alberta's Native population.

With this, one will better understand how it has helped shape the

current lifestyle of Native people in this province.

Course Outline

8 sessions concentrating on various aspects of this subject: linguistic groups, treaty making and conditions, land surrender, European and Indian interaction, the drafting of Indian and Metis government legislation. The sessions will be supplemented by films and reading material.

NOTE: There is no prior knowledge or educational experience necessary to enroll in this course, just a personal interest in Native history.

Instructor

Dr. John Foster is a professor of history with the University of Alberta. His vibrant lecture style

to create a loss of pride for the native person, a loss of self-respect or sense of personal worth. He has no opportunity to work, to be accepted by the dominant society, or to live what he sees as a meaningful life. This, in turn, causes despair and a sense of hopelessness that one finds so pervasive in the lives of many Canadian natives. They feel there is nothing worth looking forward to, that they have no future.

The person who feels hopeless and overwhelmed by the circumstances of his life often tries to escape into the oblivion induced by alcohol. Problem drinking is a major problem for Canada's native population, and at least 25% are alcoholics. As the incidence of alcoholism among Indians increases, so does the rate of all forms of violent death, of homicides, suicides and accidental death. Again and again it has been shown that alcohol was a factor in the vast majority of these deaths. The high rate of violent death and of suicide among Canadian native people has aroused considerable interest in the general population, as is reflected in the number of stories on this topic that have recently been seen in the Canadian press.

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and command of his subject has made his courses very popular with Native and non-native students alike on and off campus. He has often been requested to provide his expertise on matters pertaining to history by many of the Native organizations throughout Canada. We are very pleased to have Dr. Foster involved with the delivery of this course.

Registration Information

Dates: 8 Tuesdays beginning October 23, 1984 through until December 11, 1984

Time: 3:00 - 4:30 p.m.

Fee: \$50.00 (\$30.00 Full time U of A students only)

Location: Canadian Native Friendship Centre, 10176 - 117 Street

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Many statisticians and academicians have studied statistics, attempting to interpret and explain them. However, to date, there have been no Canadian studies in which the native perspective has been taken into account in attempting to explain the

phenomenon of native suicide in Canada.

The present study is an attempt to redress this imbalance.

The Present Study Subject Groups

1. Urban Indians (Toronto)
Toronto is the largest city in

Editorial

Managing Editor
Thelma Chalifoux

The most important thing in a democratic country is freedom of speech, freedom of religion and the opportunity to start your own business. No matter what type of business you are starting, it is yours to either succeed or to be able to say that you at least tried.

In the free enterprise system, three people are now able to see their hopes and dreams become a reality. The "Alberta Native News" is a monthly news service that will deal mostly with in depth stories pertaining to all Native people and Native issues. In order to present an objective view of the many issues facing the Native people in this

fast changing society, it was imperative that this venture be completely free of all government grants. It is hoped that this paper will be able to express the views of the people that we serve. Native communications in Alberta has come a long way from when Eugene Steinbauer first started his fifteen minute radio show for the CBC. We have gone through the many stages from babyhood to now, when we can really say we have come of age and can stand up with no government grants. The A.N.C.S. story and the training program it implemented so many years ago was the beginning of Native people being trained in the news paper business well enough to start this new experience for us

all. Being responsible for our own destiny in the powerful world of the written word. At the moment we really need your assistance in any area that you feel you might be able to contribute. We need business to advertise, we need people and writers that will contribute their stories, and we especially need artists to contribute some good art work to complement the stories we print.

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Canada with a population of over 3,000,000 people. There are between 35,000 and 45,000 Canadian native people living in Toronto. They tend to live in areas of some concentration, but because the majority have adopted the white man's dress, hair style and so forth, they are often not recognized as being Indian people by the general population. For the present study, our third author, Kim DeLeary, an Ojibway student, interviewed 108 native people living in Toronto.

2. Reserve Indians

(Grassy Narrows)

The second group of subjects in the present study were 27 residents of the Grassy Narrows Reserve. These are Ojibway people who live at Grassy Narrows which is one of 53 reserves comprising the Treaty 3 area. They live in a 10,000 acre tract on the banks of the English River near Kenora in northwestern Ontario.

The vast majority of Canadian reserves have long suffered major social and health problems as evidenced, for example, by the high rate of violent death including the abnormally high suicide rate (par-

ticularly among the young people) and other mainly alcohol related problems. The Grassy Narrows Reserve has always reflected the dismal statistics picturing reserve life and death, but in recent years, two significant factors have further exacerbated this community's difficulty. In 1963 the Grassy Narrows people were forced to relocate to make way for Hudson Bay Company logging road. The abandonment of old village and many of the sustaining traditional ways, was a move which many of the Grassy Narrows people now regret and, in fact, a significant number have begun to move back to the old village ground, in an effort to reclaim what is felt to be a more viable way of life.

The second major disruption, and one with serious long term medical, economic, social and cultural ramifications, is mercury pollution, the insidious effects of which peaked in 1970 when the reserve's fishing trade ended through government enforcement. From 1970, Grassy Narrows deteriorated to the point where it is now mainly a "make work" project Welfare community. In a population of fewer

than 1,000, 1980 statistics clearly document a serious problem existing on Grassy Narrows. Recorded were, for example, 40 suicide attempts — that is, reported attempts; 7 violent deaths; 510 incidents of juvenile delinquency; 14 training school commitments; 47 Children's Aid Society apprehensions; 309 juvenile criminal charges; 309 adult criminal charges. As one Grassy Narrows resident put it "Things got so bad that the Ontario Provincial Police were refusing to come to the reserve, even when summoned on a legitimate (e.g. medical emergency) call."

Method

The present study is an exploratory, descriptive study in which survey methods were used. Specifically, a questionnaire was developed which was used as a basis for interviews. With the Toronto group, our researcher approached native people in various public areas and asked them to cooperate with the research. On Grassy Narrows, members of the band council were responsible for contacting the 27 people who became subjects in the study.

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The Metis People Commemorate

The Centenary of the Northwest Resistance: 1885-1985

Batoche is the heart of the Metis People

The Northwest Resistance is the most important symbol of the Metis nation. For most Canadians the Northwest "Rebellion" is simply a fascinating part of the history of Western Canada. But for the Metis people it is much more. The Metis' defeat at Batoche, the last battle in a lost struggle, was at the same time the beginning of a hundred year struggle for social justice and cultural recognition by the original pioneers of the West. In 1985 the Metis people will recognize the centenary of the Resistance — by commemorating those who fell and by celebrating the renewal of Metis culture.

An Invitation to Batoche

In the summer of 1985, Batoche will be the site of continuous cultural activity with the commemoration of the Northwest Resistance as the guiding theme. In recognition of the fact that Metis, Indians and white people were involved in the resistance we wish to invite all people of good will to share in the ceremonies with us. Each battle will have its own quiet commemorative service and in July the main commemorative ceremonies will take place at "Back to Batoche" an eleven day event similar to that organized each year at Batoche by the Association of Metis and Non-Status Indians of Saskatchewan. It will feature cultural events, sports and recreation events and special events recalling the Resistance.

Three other major events will take place at Batoche during the time. The first will be a three day aboriginal music festival — which we expect to be the largest which we expect to be the kind of event. It will feature traditional and modern aboriginal music and will center on the roots of Metis musical heritage. An all-Indian/Metis rodeo will also be held featuring aboriginal riders. And toward the end of the summer the Metis people will host an international indigenous youth conference in honor of International Youth of the Anti and in recognition of the youth-colonial struggle of indigenous people around the world.

Every day at Batoche, from May through September, activities will be organized to commemorate the Resistance and to provide visitors with many expressions of Metis heritage: historical tours, campfire talks on Metis history, dramatizations, bonfire breakfasts for those staying in the new campground planned for the area. A commemoration ... a celebration ... a renewal of Metis culture. We invite everyone to join us. We hope and expect that many hundreds of Canadians — Indians, Metis and non-aboriginal people, everyone — will be joyful and learn from the commemoration of 1885. We hope, especially, that all aboriginal Canadians, with the Metis people as hosts, will see 1985 as a time of uniting all indigenous peoples in a spirit of true brotherhood. Our history and our present struggles are what we need to come together to renew and rebuild old ties; to sit around campfires as

common people and share our histories and our visions of the future. Let 1985 be a time of commemoration, renewal and a celebration of the possibilities of the future.

We see the commemoration of the Northwest Resistance as more than just a time to remember those who fell in battle during the battles of 1885. We see it as a time to make great strides in improving race relations in this country. We will be developing programs in Metis curriculum and in the media to portray to Canadians the richness and excitement of Metis heritage and the important contributions made by the Metis to the history of the west. It is our hope that in the future the media and schools will correct the negative stereotypes of Metis people, and that racial conflict between aboriginal and non-aboriginal people will be reduced.

A popular Metis history book, a pictorial history of the Metis, a full-colour map of the Northwest of 1885 — these are just a few of the curriculum projects we hope to carry out for 1985. As well, we hope to arrange for extensive television coverage of the major events at Batoche as well as television vignettes of Metis history. All in all, the Metis people and their fellow-Canadians will be treated to a year of extensive immersion in the culture and heritage of the Metis people — and the true image of the Metis will, we hope, be more firmly established in the minds of Canadians and in the culture of Canada.

We are also going to encourage Metis communities and individuals to get involved in the study of their own history and culture. A guide to tracing family trees and a guide to assist communities in writing their own local histories will be prepared for 1985. And, to assist the full expression of Metis culture today we will be holding a number of artists, writers, and musician's workshops as well as conferences of Metis youth and elders.

All of these programs and projects will be planned and coordinated by a newly established organization: the Batoche Centenary Corporation. The BCC was established in the spring of 1983 by the Association of Metis and Non-Status Indians of Saskatchewan (AMNSIS) and is guided by the Batoche '85 Commission, a board made up of Metis elected leaders and community representatives. While Saskatchewan's Metis are hosting the 1985 Commemoration, the Metis of all provinces represented under The Metis National Council, the national voice of the Metis, are involved.

The Northwest Resistance has meaning for non-Metis people as well, and we anticipate that many other organizations, communities, writers and media outlets will be planning programs of their own. We welcome the genuine interest in the centenary of 1885 and are eager to co-operate with any group or organization with plans for 1985. We are hopeful that all the commemorative activities of 1985 will reflect the seriousness and dignity that the events of 1885 signified.

For more information, or to

give your support to our efforts, contact:

The Batoche Centenary Corporation
#5, 501 - 45th Street West
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Tentative Schedule of Events

March-May, 1985

Commemorations of Various Battles: March - Duck Lake, April - Fish Creek, May - Batoche Summer '85 (Mid-May to end of August)

Daily Activities Program:

Tours, Bannock Baking, Campfire Talks

July 18-28, 1985

Back to Batoche Days

July 18-21

Metis People's Rodeo/Writers, Theatre, Musicians, Artists

Workshops/Aboriginal Music Festival

July 18-21

National Metis Youth Conference/Writers, Theatre, Musicians, Artists

Workshops/Aboriginal Music Festival

July 22-26

Metis General Assembly/International Indigenous Youth Conference. Evening: Plays on Metis History

July 27

People's Conference. Evening: Round Dance

July 28

Commemoration and People's Conference/Traditional Feast for the Dead

*Daily Events

Include sports activities, children's entertainment, historical and cultural displays and crafts.

November 16, 1985

Commemoration of hanging of Louis Riel

ONE HUNDRED YEARS

BATOCHÉ CENTENARY CORPORATION

The Metis Sash

By Thelma Chalfoux

Today it is a status symbol among the Metis men to wear a Metis sash. I have seen some women wearing this same sash, even though it was always the men who wore this colorful symbol of our past. There are some things in this world that I still feel should belong exclusively to the men and the Metis sash is one of them. The sash originated from the Northern Manitoba and Quebec regions. They were made by the Metis women who spent long arduous hours finger weaving the colorful patterns. It was often worn by men on the trails so repairs for harnesses or snowshoes could be made from the material. This colorful band of wool averaged six feet long and six inches wide. Each pattern represented different families, having a purpose similar to a coat of arms. Today the Metis sash, made and perfected by Metis women, has become like Riel; an important part of our history and a symbol of a revived tradition.

The Log and Mortar

House of the Metis
This skill was inherited from the forebears of the Metis who came from Normandy, France who on to the prairies by way of Quebec. Straight green logs were cut, skinned, and cured on elevated wooden horses. Lime for mortar was manufactured by firing limestone in a home made kiln, fired by wood, built into a steep hillside. It took a week of firing to reduce the stone to lime. This was often the period of visiting, dancing, singing and story telling among the families while they waited for the unslaked lime to be ready to be distributed to the participating families. The unslaked lime was transported home in wooden barrels and when required, it was mixed with water and sand for plaster or diluted with water for whitewash.

Lubicon Indians:

Church leaders oppose ombudsman's report

By Cathy McLaughlin

Reprinted from
Western Catholic Reporter

Church leaders involved in investigating the state of affairs of the Lubicon Lake Indian Band are dissatisfied with the Alberta Ombudsman's report on the band's situation.

Lutheran Bishop Don Sjoberg judged it "very disturbing" that Ombudsman Randall Ivany found no factual basis for allegations that there are deliberate attempts by the provincial government and multi-national oil companies to exterminate the band.

The report, said Bishop Sjoberg, was too narrow in its focus on only a few specific allegations. It should have looked at those allegations in the context of the disruption now occurring to the natives' traditional way of life.

He was one of five church leaders who spent two days in March in the Lubicon Lake area investigating the band's concerns.

The church leaders at that time

concluded that the traditional lifestyle of the Lubicon Indians was being threatened by oil and gas exploration in the area.

And they experienced a close call themselves when their vehicle was nearly forced off the road by a passing oil company truck.

The report "didn't go nearly far enough," says Rev. Bill Chelton, another of the five church leaders.

Rev. Cantelon, chairperson of the Church and Society Committee of the United Church of Alberta Conference, found the report relies heavily on the testimony of government officials, and "seems to want to justify the legal position of the government."

Also, he says, not much weight was given to the testimony of the band itself.

"Consistently, the benefit of the doubt was given to the government officials."

The office of the ombudsman, reminds Mr. Cantelon, is to give an impartial investigation. "Why is that discounted in favor of the government officials?"

The report must go farther than a few allegations, he says, and investigate the whole ethical and moral implications of government and oil company action in the area.

The Ivany report focused on several allegations against the provincial government and the oil companies raised in a World Council of Churches letter sent to then-prime minister Pierre Trudeau.

The report found no evidence that forest fires in the band's traditional area were allowed to rage unchecked or that traplines were purposely bulldozed and game deliberately scared off.

Dr. Ivany was unable to prove or disprove that band members signed Land Tenure Program agreements after being misled by provincial officials or put under duress.

He was unable to say whether provincial officials acted improperly by telling a band employee that he was a squatter on Crown land, says the report. Dr.

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Results

Profile of respondents: Of the Toronto group of 108 subjects, 41 were males and 67 females. The average age was 24.187 years with an age range from 14 to 59 years. Of the 27 subjects on Grassy Nar-

rows, 14 were males and 13 were females. The average age of this group was 26.24 years with an age range from 15 to 54 years.

With regard to status of the Toronto subjects, 70% were registered Indians or Status Indi-

ans; 26% were Non-Status and 5% were Metis. All of the subjects on the reserve were Status Indians.

With regard to residence, only 9 of the 108 Toronto subjects had actually been born in Toronto. Of the reserve subjects, 17 of the 27 had been born on the reserve, 19 had been born elsewhere and one did not answer. Of the Toronto group, the largest number had lived in the city for two years or less, while those on the reserve had lived there on average for 11.88 years. Thirty-one per cent of those in Toronto lived alone. Nineteen per cent lived with friends. Eight per cent lived with their partner and children, and eight per cent lived with parents and siblings. This contrasts markedly with the reserve Indians, of whom over fifty per cent lived with their partner and children, 23% with parent and siblings and the rest in other forms of group living situations.

There are 37 different reserves represented among the 108 urban Indians in Toronto. Many of these people came from other reserves in Ontario, including 2 which have histories of extreme violence. They also came from as far away as the Micmac reserves on the East coast, from the prairies and a number from the West, particularly from Alberta. All of the Indians from the reserve group were in fact members of the Grassy Narrows band. When asked about their source of income, 64% of the Toronto group reported that they were employed, usually in semi-skilled office and blue collar work. Twenty-one per cent had no income or were on Welfare, and 15% were supported by other people, i.e., by friends or family members. On the Grassy Narrows Reserve, 78% were employed primarily in "make-work" projects of one kind or another, and 22% were unemployed or were supported by other people.

When asked if they believed in the traditional Indian way of life, a full 100% of the Grassy Narrows group said that yes, they did believe, and of this group, 74% said that they actively followed and practised the traditional Indian ways. Of the Toronto group, 69% said that they did believe in

the traditional way, however, only 29% said that they actually practised and followed the dictates of this traditional way.

The profile that grows out of this information shows of the Toronto group a young status Indian who has lived in the city for 2 years or less; who lives alone or with friends; who may be working in an office, factory or in construction; and who may believe in the traditional Indian way, but may not actually follow it, possibly because there is some difficulty in practising the traditional Indian way in an urban setting, when one is anxious to be accepted and to blend into the dominant culture and where the traditional Indian clothing and other markings would set one apart. The subjects on the reserve are also young, Treaty or Status Indians, who have lived on the reserve for quite a long time and who live with their nuclear or extended family, probably in a fairly large family, and who is working probably in a "make-work" project or possibly in a helping agency. This young person belongs in the traditional Indian way and attempts to follow it.

Personal Crisis
Subjects in the study were asked if within the last year they had experienced a major crisis situation in their life. It turned out that many were reluctant to answer this question. They wrote comments such as "information is too personal". This possibly reflects the belief of Indian people that to give other people information about yourself is to give them power over you. However, of those in the Toronto group who actually responded to the question, 82% admitted that yes, they had experienced a major life crisis within the previous year. The types of problems which they described related very much to the difficulty of surviving in a large, urban setting. They described primarily financial and housing

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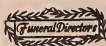
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problems, followed by such problems as those of relationships with other persons, physical or medical problems and alcohol and substance abuse. When asked what type of help they received, or where they turned to get assistance, 38% said that they turned to friends or to family members. However, it is significant that 35% turned to no one, and instead attempted to cope with their problems alone. The remainder turned to various other sources of help. On the reserve there was similarly a reluctance to discuss personal crisis situations. However, of those that responded 42% said that yes, they had experienced a personal crisis of which the most common related to alcohol consumption and drinking problems with a number of other relationships-related problems in second place. All went to some help giver, to seek assistance, the majority, over 50%, going to the native Crisis Team. Another 33% went to an agency that they perceived as appropriate to their problem, with the remainder turning to professionals such as doctors and to their friends and family members.

The next section of the questionnaire dealt with experiences with suicide. The respondents were asked if they, themselves, had ever made a suicide attempt. Seven per cent of the Toronto group admitted that they had made a suicide attempt themselves. On the reserve, 52% said that they had made a suicide attempt, but when asked to describe the circumstances of these attempts, less than half wanted to discuss them in any way.

The next question was "Do you know any native people who have actually killed themselves?" "Can you tell me a little about each of them?" The Toronto group described 71 committed suicides. Of the 31 women, 55 were men and 16 were women, for a ratio of 3.4 to 1. The average age of the committed suicides was 21.7 years. The majority (23) had shot themselves, and another 17 died by hanging. Twelve were overdoses and the rest showed a variety of methods. What was of most interest was the inability of the respondent to describe the factors leading to the suicides. They often said that the suicide came as a complete surprise, or that they didn't know anything was troubling these suicidal individuals. They sometimes assumed that there must have been a problem because the person drank a great deal, or seemed depressed, but by and large they didn't show any real insight into

the nature of the difficulties with which the individual was dealing.

The following are examples of comments made by respondents:

"I am still wondering why Michael killed himself. It seemed to me that he didn't have any problems. I guess booze is a bad influence on people. I haven't heard of any Indians committing suicide while sober-minded."

"I knew this girl because she was from the same reserve that I am. She was 19 years old — from Moose Factory. She shot herself. She was mixed up about many things I guess, but never really talked about them. She never asked or tried to get help."

"He was an acquaintance at work. 20 years old, from Wemikom, Ontario. He shot himself and died instantly. No. His friends didn't try to get help because they didn't expect this to happen. He was a quiet boy."

"D.G. He was a close friend of mine — 18. He shot himself in the mouth. It seemed like he had everything going for him so I don't know why he did it."

The respondents from Grassy Narrows described 32 suicides, 23 males and 9 females for a ratio of 2.5 to 1. The mean age of the committed suicides was 15.21 years. In 23 cases, the method of suicide was given. Of these, 17 shot themselves, 4 overdosed and 2 died by hanging. The causes and contributing factors were again described only sketchily. Most frequently family, marital problems and problems with alcohol were described as contributing factors. Again, the respondents noted that the suicidal individuals hadn't sought help, and there was no clear indication as to why they had chosen to kill themselves.

Altogether, 109 cases of native suicides were described by the respondents. There were a great many themes which tended to recur throughout the described circumstances of these suicides. Similar profiles of native suicides have been drawn in studies by Syer (1979), Boldt and Javits (1981) and Ward (1982). All three studies refer to the profoundly

low self-esteem of the young native person. They also remark on the internalization of feelings and conflicts. Poor interpersonal skills, which result in an over-dependence on the nuclear families, are similarly common findings of these studies. Ward particularly stresses that the completed suicide group he studied related little with the external world, that they appear to have failed to develop love relationships or any degree of intimacy outside the parental family. He notes that their contacts with peer groups were superficial and that they had not developed any significant relationships with peers. He further notes that there is a marked difficulty in communication and expressing both positive and negative feelings. This of course was a finding stressed again and again in the present study. Another common finding is the marked lack of coping skills in life, and the habitual use of alcohol as a retreat from failed life circumstances. The living situation of the completed suicides are often marked by parental family discord and indications that there is a dissolution of the family. Furthermore, it appears that frequently the suicide victim has been made the scapegoat or the one who is to blame for the family problems. What is described, in summary, is a particularly vulnerable young person, with few interpersonal resources, who breaks down suicidally under cumulative stress.

The issue of available help is obviously a significant one for na-

tive people. The questionnaire asked "What do you think are the best resources and sources of help for native people in your community?" Of the 180 respondents in the Toronto group, 59 couldn't name a single resource. Those that did listed first other native people, i.e. friends or family members. A much smaller group indicated that they would return to the Native Friendship Centre for help. Others mentioned elders and spiritual leaders and finally some spoke about the native A.A. programme. On the reserve, 48% couldn't name a specific resource, but of those who could, over 50% referred to the special Native Crisis Team that had been set up on Grassy Narrows just over a year ago. The second resource that was mentioned was the native A.A. programme and the third was other native people, i.e. friends or family members. Respondents were then asked, "If you knew of a native counsellor, would you go to him or her?" Eighty-two per

cent of the Toronto group said that yes, they would go to a native counsellor. Eighty-eight per cent of the Grassy Narrows group said that they too would go to a native counsellor. There were

Cont'd on page 6

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As darkness falls

cont'd from page 5

many comments on this question. For example, "usually native people are so intimidated by white people they wouldn't even think of going to them for help. The idea of having an Indian-run Crisis Centre would definitely help."

"I think that there is a big need for a suicide Crisis Centre for native people in all native communities, be they big or small. Such centres should be fully staffed by Indians because I certainly would not like to go and talk to a WHITE person who knows nothing about Indian problems. Such centres should be well advertised to native people and should be open 24 hours a day all year."

It is interesting to note that several made comments to the effect that even with a native counsellor, it would be preferable to have someone from outside the group because "that person could be trusted with your personal problems". The anxiety about information sharing within the group itself is obvious from comments such as this.

Conclusions

From the information provided by both groups of respondents, it is possible to draw a profile of the young native person most at risk for suicide. He is isolated, either in actuality as in those who have migrated to the large urban centre of Toronto and are living alone, or simply feels isolated because of his inability to establish relationships outside his immediate family, a family which is often breaking down under stress. In addition, the young person is unable to express his feelings and his needs and has no sense of where he can go to get help from someone who will understand his problems. It is significant, for example, that in Toronto, a city with several hundred community

mental health and social service agencies, that 59% of the Indian respondents could not name a single helping agency that they would trust enough to approach for help. One positive finding was the indication that trained native crisis intervention workers can provide effective help to native people in crisis situations. A lesson can be learned from the experience at Grassy Narrows.

As previously outlined, the Grassy Narrows situation had deteriorated greatly by 1980. Many of the young people were routinely sniffing gasoline, while the adults were seeking oblivion in alcohol. There were daily incidents of vandalism, violence and other indications of community in collective trouble. In December, 1980, a 3 person native crisis team began operation, receiving people in need of assistance at the crisis centre, and making nightly patrols through the reserve to deal with crises in situ.

In the 12 months following the establishment of a crisis team, the results have been dramatic. Many of the problems which had existed in almost epidemic proportions have shown marked improvement in comparisons of 1980 and 1981 rates of attempted suicide, violent deaths, gas sniffing, breach of curfew, training school commitments, C.A.S. apprehensions—all clearly proof that the native crisis team has had a positive impact on Grassy Narrows. In 1980 there were 40 recorded suicide attempts; in 1981 14, a 55% decrease. Violent deaths dropped from 7 in 1980 to 3 in 1981 (a 57% improvement), the first year that there has been any drop in the statistics. Gas sniffing is no longer recorded as the incidence is almost zero. The crisis team, mandated by the band

council, have enforced the by-law which forbids the sale of solvents to minors. Delinquency cases dropped by 88% from 510 to 62. Training school commitments decreased by 50% and Children's Aid Society apprehensions also decreased by over 50%. Vandalism has been brought almost under control, and medical emergencies (including alcohol abuse) have declined significantly. There is a greatly improved relationship with the police, probation officers and other agencies.

The crisis team recorded 2,040 contacts in 1980 with a total of 166 contacts with individual children under the age of 16, and 199 contacts with individual adults. Thus, in a population of fewer than 1,000, 413 or almost half of the people, have been involved with the crisis team. One of the authors in communication with the leader of the crisis team was told of the crises handled recently. Two not atypical ones included stopping a rape in progress, and rescuing an infant that had been abandoned in a snow bank.

People on the reserve obviously support the crisis team. Many of the respondents in the Grassy Narrows survey listed the crisis team as the best resource available to them and indicated that they would definitely contact the team if they, themselves, needed help.

Thus, it would seem that the best suicide prevention strategy to adopt might be that the white hot-shot professionals take a back seat and act as trainers or possibly consultants to the native suicide prevention and crisis intervention worker, allowing them to be the front-line people who reach out to the native person in crisis.

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Church leaders oppose

cont'd from page 3

Ivany found a final allegation that Northland School Division officials acted improperly in connection with a proposal to build a school in the area unsubstantiated.

In the report, Dr. Ivany stresses the boundaries of his jurisdiction, and his inability to investigate the land claim of the band.

"The land claim is a matter which can only be resolved either by the political process or by the courts."

The resolution of the land claim affected his ability to investigate the allegation that a band member was deemed a "squatter" on Crown land.

Bishop Sjoberg criticizes the narrow parameters of the report and its investigation of only a few, specific allegations.

For instance, he says, the building of roads into the area represents a "severe hardship" for its residents, something not addressed by the report.

The WCC letter concluded that "In the last couple of years, the Alberta provincial government and dozens of multi-national oil companies have taken actions which could have genocidal consequences."

In his report, says Dr. Ivany, "I was able to find no factual basis for (that conclusion). I have not been provided with any evidence, either from the members of the band or from other sources, that could substantiate such a serious accusation."

The "refusal of the Crown to recognize the land claim which is being asserted by the band, cannot be said to be an attempt to practice genocide."

Bishop Sjoberg said initially he was loathe to use the term "genocide" and dissociated himself personally from its use in the WCC letter. But after reading the

Ivany report, he now says the term must be used.

Archbishop Henri Legare, another of the church leaders who visited Lubicon Lake in March, declined comment on the ombudsman's report which he had not seen when contacted by the WCC.

Sister Sheranne Johnston of the Social Justice Commission of the Edmonton Archdiocese, finds the report lacking, in that it doesn't address the land claim of the band.

The Indians have territorial rights, she says, that haven't been settled. But the actions of the oil developers assume that the land belongs to the Crown.

The large-scale development going on in the area, says Sister Johnston, "is very damaging to the life and culture of the people."

Three recommendations came

out of Dr. Ivany's investigations.

In relation to the charge that trappers were deliberately damaged, the ombudsman suggested that "the various cultural backgrounds" of trappers be taken into consideration by the Trapper Compensation Program, to allow flexibility in the system of reporting trap damage.

No charges of trap damage had ever been filed with the Trapper Compensation Program, as Dr. Ivany concluded, "in some cases, complaints are settled on the spot."

Second, Dr. Ivany recommended that trappers be notified "as far as possible in advance" of the building of a pipeline in the trapper's area.

Finally, the report suggested the government ensure it has qualified interpreters for the explanation of legalities to band members.

Health Centre plan approved

The Hobbema Indian Health Services Board recently approved a design for its new Health Services Centre, to be built at Hobbema.

The construction of the centre is scheduled to begin sometime in the Spring of '85 as part of a commitment made to the Hobbema Band Councils by Monique Beggin, Minister of Health and Welfare at the time of the transfer of the Charles Cammell from federal to provincial jurisdiction.

The centre, 1,200 sq. metres, (almost 13,000 sq. ft.) must still be approved by the Federal Government. This should receive final approval sometime in the fall or winter of this year.

The facility will include the

Board's offices, community health offices and clinics, a medical clinic with emergency treatment provisions and room for two physicians, a laboratory and radiology facility, a dental clinic for one dentist, a speech and hearing clinic and a physiotherapy clinic. There will also be a retail pharmacy to take care of any immediate medicinal needs.

The proposed site of the new centre is across from the Ermineskin Day Care Centre and behind the Ermineskin Auto Care Centre. The centre has been appropriately dedicated by the four Hobbema Chiefs and an agreement should be concluded on site in the near future.

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A positive program

cont'd from page 8



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The I.T.V. television show, "Our Native Heritage", has been enhanced with the addition of two new hosts. Bruce Makokis of C.F.C.W. and Joyce Means, from southern Alberta, will be bringing you more informative and entertaining subjects to provoke and surprise. It is hoped that the show will be able to deal with

more contemporary issues facing the Indian people and will also help to promote a better understanding of Native problems to all Albertans. With the addition of producer Graeme Dibbs, the show's "facelift" is complete and will begin airing in September. Good Luck "Native Heritage" from your friends at "The Alberta Native News."

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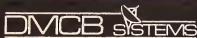
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SummerFest '84

By Robert John Layman

SummerFest '84 was a big success this year with the Edmonton Folk Music Festival, Jazz City, the Fringe Theatre Festival, and of course the annual multi-cultural extravaganza Heritage Days.

The Heritage Days celebration, held in Hawrelak Park in Edmonton enjoyed both great weather and record turn outs. While the folk festival the following weekend didn't do as well attendance wise the music was good and the atmosphere mellow.

Both Jazz City, which started on the same night as the last of the Folk Festival, and the Folk Festival itself celebrated their fifth birthday's this year. Jazz City en-

joyed a record attendance this year, with many a fine concert at the Citadel's Shochor Theatre and Centennial Library Theatre not to mention the numerous free concerts in Edmonton's downtown parks at noon hours.

The Fringe Theatre which took place in Edmonton's south side area of East Garneau in a number of converted buildings was perhaps the biggest success of all. The Fringe was composed of eight theatres, all within half a block or so of Whyte Ave. and all plays enjoyed good to excellent attendance.

All three events will return next year for what will hopefully be an even better SummerFest for '85.



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Dear Editor,

I would like to take this opportunity to congratulate you on your first issue of Alberta Native News. That there exists a private initiative impresses me because of the healthy sense of competition and news away from any governmental influences.

Native people, through Alberta Native News, have shown that they understand the "power of the press" and that we will use it to communicate and educate ourselves, as well as the larger Canadian public.

To the people of Alberta Native News, I wish you every success and I look forward to meeting your staff in the future.

Yours, In the Spirit of Riel,
Metis Association of Alberta

Jo-Ann Daniels
Vice-President

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A Special Series of Short Workshops

Native People and the Law

November 5, 6, & 7, 1984 through
Native Education Services

The University of Alberta is offering a special series of short workshops on *Native People and the Law*.

The series begins with a one-day session on *The Indian Act*. A basic understanding of the development and its major provisions will be provided. The second day will offer a half-day session on *Native People and Family Law*. This session will provide basic information to participants on issues of family law that are universal to the province, but with a special reference to issues which are different for native people.

The afternoon session will deal with: *The Administration of Indian Wills and Estates and the Protection of Private Property*. This session will outline the special provisions of Indian (Status) wills and estates; the right of band members to share in band property; the protection and responsibility of debts and contracts; and the exemption from and responsibility for taxation.

And finally, the third half-day session will concentrate on: *Legal Issues Concerning Native Women*. An historical overview will be presented regarding the topic of status and loss of status of Indian Woman. It will also address other concerns for Indian Women such as: inheritance; rights to

possession of reserve land; and participation in band politics. Note: This session is not a panel session. It will only attempt to bring a legalistic perspective to the topic.

The Indian Act

Monday, November 5, 1984

8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

This workshop will offer an examination of the current Indian Act and the cases that have arisen from its application.

History of the Act from 1868 to present.

•Government policy for implementation

•Development of and inclusion of various sections

The present Act

•Definition of Indian entitlement to registration

•Possession of reserves by band members

•Surrender of reserve land for lease or sale.

Native People and Family Law

Tuesday, November 6, 1984

8:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon

Areas to be discussed:

•Child Welfare

•Indian Act provisions

•Department of Indian Affairs policy

•Apprehension

•Adoption and foster homes

•Guardianship

The Courts and Court

Proceedings

Divorce

Family Allowance

The Administration of Indian Wills & The Protection of Private Property

Tuesday, November 6, 1984

1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Areas to be covered:

•Will: Form of, requirements for valid will, distribution of property on death.

•Intestacy: Distribution of property if there is no will, rights of spouse and children and common-law spouse, what happens to reserve property.

•Taxation: Exemption from taxation, the terms under which Status Indian people are liable to taxation.

Legal Issues

Concerning Native Women

Wednesday, November 7, 1984

8:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon

Areas to be covered:

•Status Question:

•Entitlement to registration

•Marrying in and out

•Double mother clause

•Change of band on marriage

•Illegitimate children

•Enfranchisement of husband

•Proposed changes to the laws:

•Retrospectivity

•Economic effects

•Cultural and social consideration

•Position of non-Indian spouse
Inheritance and Wills
Possession of Reserve Land
Voting and Holding Office

The Instructor

Donna Lea Hawley is a lawyer with an academic background in Anthropology. She has lectured and tutored Native students at both the Muskawache Cultural College in Hobbema and at the University of Alberta. She has also worked as a legal advisor to the Louis Bull Indian Band in

Hobbema. Her book, "The Indian Act Annotated", was published in 1984. Ms. Hawley is currently at the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, B.C.

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November 6 & 7, 1984

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Edmonton Folk Music Festival

Review of

By Robert John Layman

The Edmonton Folk Music Festival got underway smoothly August 10 as planned and all who came were treated to a weekend of fine music. The almost three day long festival enjoyed its fifth anniversary this year and the bill was as varied and full as ever.

The first day (Friday, August 10) went well with only a little rain at the end of the day. K.D. Lang wrapped up the first day and she played until the Edmonton City Police were obliged to ask the festival people to shut it down due to some complaints. Too bad as K.D. is a most entertaining and lively performer who expresses herself with enlightened insight and a witty eccentricity.

The second day started in the morning with workshops and performers on stage all day. The day ended quite a bit earlier as the City Police got the jump on com-



plaints from those not in a festival mood by asking them to shut down by 12:00 midnight. Two groups who stand out in my mind from Saturday's performers are an interesting and unique group *Sukay* who played the sometimes mystic, somehow always moving music of the Chilean Andes. Also *Queen Ida and her Bon Temps Zydeco Band* tickled me. I don't think I've ever heard an accordion played quite like that, a lively mix of cajun and folk music, the Queen and her Band were definitely one of the stars of the show.

The third and last day of the festival ended early and the *Tannahill Weavers* and *Asleep At The Wheel* were my favourites. The Weavers and their brand of Celtic Folk are familiar to many Edmonton area residents as are the Texas Swing sounds of *Asleep At The Wheel*. The weekend was a good one musically, and the crowd though smaller than hoped for, got on well with the staff and police and a good time was had by all.



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This Month In History

September Eighteenth, 1985

was Louis Riel's original execution date.

Famous Metis Leaders

Cuthbert Grant ... (1796-1854)

In the evolution of the Metis people as a nation, Cuthbert Grant stands at the beginning as the first leader of the Metis people and as a man who worked to foster a sense of identity among his people.

Grant was born at Fort Tremblant, located in Saskatchewan near the Manitoba border north east of Yorkton. He was sent to be educated in his father's home in Scotland. He returned to the Red River area as a young man and began work as a clerk with the North West Company.

Upon his return to the west, Grant became well known among the Metis, and from 1814-1821 during the conflict between the rival fur companies, the North West Company and the Hudsons Bay Co. he became the acknowledged leader of the Metis people. In 1824 Cuthbert Grant

was given a large tract of land by the Hudsons Bay Company. He founded the Metis Settlement of Grantown (now St. Francois Xavier Manitoba) which soon became a successful community and served as a model for other Metis settlements in the area.

In 1828, Grant was appointed "Warden of the Plains" by the Hudson Bay Company. As such, he was to police the fur trade and prevent illegal trading. In 1835 he was appointed to represent the Metis on the "Council of the Assiniboia" which was established to govern the Red River country. He continued to live in Grantown, acting as the pharmacist and physician and eventually the Justice of the Peace and Sheriff of the area.

Cuthbert Grant died in 1854. The Metis people had lost a great leader.

THIS BIT OF HISTORY IS COURTESY OF THE ASSOCIATION OF METIS AND NON-STATUS INDIANS OF SASKATCHEWAN AND THE SASKATCHEWAN HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSION



History of

The John Howard Society of Alberta

The organization takes its name and its spirit from the 18th century humanitarian John Howard whose name has become a symbol of humane consideration for the incarcerated individual.

Since it is a fundamental belief of the John Howard Society that crime is a community problem involving citizens other than offenders, it is particularly significant that John Howard was himself a voluntary and unofficial inquirer into the subject of 18th century prisons and prisoners.

Howard's career as a prison reformer truly began with his appointment in 1773 as Sheriff of Bedford, a post of honour usual-

ly reserved for men willing to do its repugnant duties by deputy. With this appointment, Howard began his 20 year labours to ameliorate the terrible conditions of the prisons and prisoners of his day. Through extensive visits to almost all the prisons in Great Britain and Ireland he collected the data that became his famous report "On the State of Prisons in England and Wales". This report, which painstakingly documented the wretchedness of contemporary prisons in great detail, has been described as the first successful attempt to arouse public opinion, independent of class or order, to a concern on grounds

of justice and humanity about the treatment of a large class of people. This report and Howard's subsequent writings were successful in drawing attention to the subject of prisons so that various regulations were instituted that in time remedied some of the more obvious evils of the system.

John Howard has been described by his various bio-

Cont'd on page 14



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The John Howard Society

cont'd. from page 13

graphers as possessing qualities of common sense, courage, enterprise and resolute determination. He was a man of action rather than of thoughts or words — not so much a propounder of schemes of social improvement, as an explorer who brought the deplorable state of prisons to the public's attention so that it could be acted upon.

The example of John Howard, an involved private citizen, reflects the credo of the John Howard Society that there cannot be an effective attempt to deal with the problems of crime without citizen participation.

The John Howard Society of Alberta was formed on September 15, 1947, largely due to the influence of the late George B. Henwood, O.B.E., Q.C., who developed his interest in forming the Society from his personal experience as the former deputy Attorney General of Alberta. With the organizational support of the

Edmonton Council of Social Agencies, the Society chartered under the Companies Act (of Alberta) and was incorporated on April 11, 1949.

The Society was formed primarily to relieve distress of ex-prisoners returning home on their release after having paid their debt to society. At this time the John Howard Society functioned entirely through the support and work of volunteers. It became imperative later that professional staff were needed as backup resource people, as volunteer involvement increased and the demand for professional counselling services became apparent.

Programs of the Society now include:

- Halfway Houses (Edmonton and Calgary)
- Bail Supervision (Edmonton and Calgary)
- Parole Supervision (All Districts)
- Probation Supervision (Edmonton and Calgary)
- Juvenile Alternative (Lethbridge and Grande Prairie)
- Criminal Justice Education (All Districts)
- Counselling/Referral (All Districts)

For information regarding membership, services, or pro-

grams, please contact the John Howard Society of Alberta office nearest you.

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Saskatchewan Metis get economic development

The headquarters of the Native Economic Development Program in Winnipeg, announced a contribution of \$412,000.00 toward the developmental and start-up phases of the Saskatchewan Native Economic Development Corporation. The announcement was made on August 27, 1984 by Don Moses, Chairman of the N.E.D.P., on behalf of the Honorable David Smith, Minister of Small Business and Tourism.

The Saskatchewan Native Economic Development Corporation is a new, province wide institution which intends to assist Saskatchewan Metis and Non-Status Indians in the development of their economic potential.

The corporation is sponsored by the Association of Metis and Non-Status Indians of Saskatchewan and will operate as a separate and independent corporate entity.

Specific activities to be undertaken as a result of the N.E.D.P. contribution include the finalization of the corporate concept and structure, the preparation of a

comprehensive business plan, the development of the organizational systems, monitoring and evaluation procedures, budget planning, consultation activities, the preparation of financial and investment plans and a preparation for capitalization. The developmental and start-up phases will be completed within the next 12 months.

Once it is operational, the

Saskatchewan Native Economic Development Corporation is expected to provide various economic development services to the 85,000 Metis and Non-Status Indians in Saskatchewan.

Mr. Moses stated that, "The

Metis and Non-Status Indians of Saskatchewan believe that the development of true economic self-reliance requires the creation of a viable economic entity which they control and for which they are accountable to their people."



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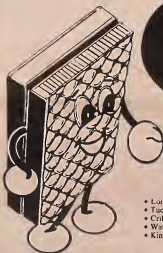
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Edmonton, Alberta

USED TRUCK SPECIAL

1972 Ford Truck and 8 foot camper for only	\$1800
1978 Ford Super Cab, V8 auto P.S. P.B.	\$2295
1981 Dodge 4x4 V8 auto P.S. P.B. only	\$6950
1981 GMC Pick-up Blue V8 Auto P.S. P.B. Radio	\$5995
1979 Ford Boogie Van nice interior	\$6900
1983 Dodge W50 4x4, 4 spd. Only 28000 km	\$7900
1982 Chev S10 4spd. V6, air cond., tu tone paint	\$7750
1980 Dodge Boogie Van, V8 auto P.S. P.B. Stereo and more.	\$7200

WARRANTIES AVAILABLE ON MOST USED TRUCKS
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WE BUY CARS FOR CASH

Congratulations to the Management and Staff of the Alberta Native News

On their New Publication of a
Native Newspaper in Alberta.

Best Wishes for a
Successful Venture



from

Hon. Milt Pahl

Minister Responsible for Native Affairs

Alberta Mortgage and Housing Corporation

Our Name has Changed

But Our Service to You is Still the Same

Effective August 1, 1984 the Alberta Mortgage and Housing Corporation Act, Bill 41, takes effect. This Act combines the operations of Alberta's two housing crown corporations, Alberta Housing Corporation and Alberta Home Mortgage Corporation, into a single agency. If you are one of our clients, the amalgamation of the two crowns will not effect our relationship. In fact, one of the purposes of the amalgamation will be to increase operating efficiencies. We will keep you apprised of exactly what this means to you in the future. For now, it's business as usual.

The following is a listing of the combined office locations of the new Alberta Mortgage and Housing Corporation. If you are currently dealing through one of these offices, please continue to do so. If you are a senior citizen or a low-to-modest income earner and are seeking accommodation advice, please contact the office nearest you.

Mortgage Lending:

Branch Offices:

10350 - 124 Street
Edmonton, Alberta
T5N 3V9

112 - 28 Street S.E.
Calgary, Alberta
T2A 6J9

#101, 266 - 4 Street S.W.
Medicine Hat, Alberta
T1A 4E5

10020 - 102 Avenue
Grande Prairie, Alberta
T8V 6Z7

10003 Biggs Avenue
Fort McMurray, Alberta
T9H 1S4

5913 - Gaetz Avenue
Red Deer, Alberta
T4N 4C4

316 - 13 Street S.
Lethbridge, Alberta
T1J 2V6

Central Office:
One Twelve Professional Centre
10050 - 112 Street
Edmonton, Alberta T6B 2J1

Land and Housing:

Branch Offices:

901 Centre Street N.
Calgary, Alberta
T2E 6P3

5907 - 4th Avenue
Box 670
Edson, Alberta
T0E 0P0

10003 Biggs Avenue
Fort McMurray, Alberta
T9H 1S4

9621 - 90 Avenue
Bag 900-22
Peace River, Alberta
T0H 2X0

406 - 10 Avenue N.E.
Box 8
Slave Lake, Alberta
T0G 2A0

5238 - 50 Avenue
Box 3189
St. Paul, Alberta
T0A 3A0

Central Office:
Atria Building
9405 - 50 Street
Edmonton, Alberta T6B 2T4

Alberta Mortgage and Housing Corporation

Fulfilling the Government's commitment to the provision of
affordable accommodation to low and modest income Albertans.